



Low Carb – Not Eating Smart

Good nutrition, along with regular physical activity, is important for life long health. To EAT SMART entails eating a variety of foods from the five major food groups daily and not falling for the myths touted by fad diets. Low carbohydrate diets are the latest “new” and “revolutionary” fad diet that has simply made an encore appearance from the past. These diets rely on a false claim that consuming or eliminating a whole category of food can cause weight loss or gain. But no food can. Such diets, despite how popular, have little credible scientific evidence of their success or safety. In fact, recent data suggests that weight loss from high protein, low carbohydrate diets is mainly due to the reduction of calorie intake, not the elimination of carbohydrate. Additionally, these diets tend to be low in calcium and fiber, as well as many important nutrients and vitamins. Some of these fad diets advise taking vitamin-mineral supplements to replace those lost nutrients. However, supplements are meant to do just that – supplement – and should not be used as a replacement for nutrient-rich foods. These diets also advocate taking advantage of ketosis to accelerate weight loss. Ketosis is an abnormal body process that occurs during starvation due to lack of carbohydrate. Ketosis can cause fatigue, constipation, nausea, and vomiting. Potential long-term side effects of ketosis include heart disease, bone loss, and kidney disease.

Eating smart is the recommended way to promote weight loss, support weight maintenance, and prevent chronic disease by choosing a diet high in complex carbohydrates, fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products.

If you need help to EAT SMART and prevent weight gain, *Shape Your Future... Your Weigh!*TM can help. Contact your local base Health and Wellness Center (HAWC) or Dietitian for more information or visit the *Shape Your Future... Your Weigh!*TM consumer website at <http://airforcemedicine.afms.mil/shapeyourfuture>.